



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Agricultural industry applying for grants to reduce trade barriers, promote markets

OLYMPIA — The state Department of Agriculture announced today a market promotion and trade barrier matching-fund grant program of \$2.1 million. Commodity commissions, industry associations and non-profit organizations representing diverse food and grower interests may apply for the funds.

The deadline for the first round of grants is Nov. 30 with applications to be selected and awarded by January. Two additional rounds are scheduled for July and November of next year. The suggested scope of grant proposals ranges from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

"Promoting international markets for our farmers and food processors is a long term benefit to state agriculture," said Janet Leister, manager of the Food and Agriculture Marketing Program.

Market promotion funds may be used for in-store promotions, sales missions, trade shows, and other domestic or international marketing activities. The trade barrier fund provides "seed" money for industry groups to match with other funds to fight issues such as tariffs, dumping products into the U.S. market from overseas competitors, quotas, and a host of other market access issues.

This matching fund program for market promotions and trade barriers was funded for the first time by the Legislature in this past session for \$700,000. With the one-time \$10.1 million federal specialty crop funds allocated to Washington state, more funds were added to these new innovative programs.

"The Legislature recognized that having this type of grant program is essential to maintain the economic vitality of agriculture," Leister said. She noted the broad agricultural sector contributed \$4 billion in international sales last year, the second largest export category for the state.

An advisory committee will assist Leister's staff in reviewing the applications. Proposals are expected to come from industries such as tree fruits, vegetables and row crops, shellfish and seafood, berries and specialty crops, bulk commodities, and processed foods and beverages.

To receive an application for the grants, contact Leisa Schumaker at lschumaker@agr.wa.gov.

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